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VII.—THE STORY OF GRISANDOLE : A STUDY IN THE LEGEND OF MERLIN.

I.

One of the less widely known episodes connected with the enchanter Merlin in romantic material is the *Story of Grisandole*, which is contained in the French and in the English prose *Merlin*,¹ and also in the *Livre d'Artus*, P.² It is apparently so trivial in character, and contains such unattractive elements that it would scarcely merit careful study, were it not that a detailed examination brings to light an early and important form of the Merlin legend, which otherwise would remain unknown, and which as yet has not attracted attention.³

Avenable, the daughter of a banished duke of Alemagne, having been separated from her parents at the time of their banishment, disguises herself as a squire, and under the name of Grisandole, enters the service of Julius Cæsar, emperor of Rome.

Merlin knows that the emperor at this time is sorely troubled by an incomprehensible dream, and accordingly he goes to the forest of Romenie to help him. He takes the form of a great stag with a white foot, dashes bellowing into Rome, and followed by a crowd of people he speeds through the city into the palace, and bursts into the presence of Julius Cæsar. Kneeling before him he tells him that only the wild man of the woods (*l'homme sauvage*) can reveal to him the meaning of his dream. Then opening the palace gates by magic, he makes his escape, and suddenly vanishes from sight. The emperor offers the hand of his daughter and half of his kingdom as a reward for the capture of the man of the woods or of the

¹ *Roman de Merlin*, ed. Sommer, London, 1894 (referred to below as *Merlin*), pp. 300–312; *Merlin or the Early History of King Arthur*, ed. Wheatley, (E. E. T. S.), London, 1865–1899 (referred to below as *English Merlin*), pp. 420–439.

² *Livre d'Artus*, P., summarized by Freymond, *Zs. f. fr. Sp.*, xvii (1895), 33.

³ The episode has received a cursory examination from Benfey, *Ausland*, xlii (1858), 1040; Schmidt, *Märchen des Straparola*, Berlin, 1817, p. 339; Rua, "*Le Piacevole Notti*," Rome, 1898, pp. 61 ff.

stag. In quick response the young knights of the court search the forest, but all return empty-handed. Grisandole alone will not abandon the quest. One day as she kneels in prayer in the woods, the great stag with the white foot appears before her, and bids her come there on the following day with five companions, build a fire, spread food on a table before it, and then withdraw to a distance; she will shortly see the wild man of the woods. No sooner has she obeyed these instructions than the wild man, black, unshaven, and in rags comes to the fire, eats all the food greedily, and stretching himself down before the blaze, goes to sleep. Grisandole and her companions bind him fast on one of their horses, and ride away with him to court.

On the way the wild man breaks into sudden laughter three times:—once, on looking at Grisandole; again, on seeing a crowd of mendicants waiting before an abbey for alms; the third time, on seeing a squire, in a chapel where they stop to attend mass, leave his place three times during the service, strike his master a blow, and then stand abashed, declaring that he has been impelled by an irresistible power. Grisandole asks why he has laughed; but the man of the woods replies only by calling her a deceitful creature, full of guile, and by refusing to give the reason for his laughter except before the emperor. When he is presented to Julius Cæsar, he promises to explain his conduct on the following day in the hearing of all the baronage of the land, and he insists that the queen and her twelve ladies in waiting also be present. As they enter the hall he laughs, and when the emperor demands the reason, he relates Cæsar's mysterious dream to him, and interprets it as signifying that the queen's twelve ladies are really youths in disguise, with whom she is leading an unlawful life. He further explains that he had laughed on looking at Grisandole, because a woman by her craft had taken him prisoner, when no man could capture him; he had laughed in the abbey, because the poor were clamoring for alms when in the ground beneath their feet great treasure was buried; he had called Grisandole deceitful, because she is a woman, yet wears the garb of a man; he had laughed in the chapel, not at the blow given by the squire to his master, but because beneath the squire's feet was hidden a mass of treasure, and each blow signified one of the evils of riches. He advises the emperor to restore Grisandole's parents to their land, and to bestow his daughter in marriage on Grisandole's brother. Julius Cæsar examines the queen's youths, finds that the wild man's words are true, and commands that the queen and the youths be burned. He bids Grisandole lay aside her disguise, and discovers that she is the most beautiful maiden in the world. He accordingly follows the wild man's advice as far as it goes, and extends it agreeably to himself by marrying Grisandole (Avenable). The wild man refuses to reveal who the great stag is, or his own name, and leaves the hall abruptly, writing an inscription in Hebrew¹ on one of the

¹ Incomprehensible terms are commonly referred to a Hebrew or Chaldaic source in the romances. See L. A. Paton, *Studies in Fairy Mythology*, Boston, 1903, p. 245.

doorposts as he passes out. One day, somewhat later, a messenger from Greece¹ appears at court, and interprets the Hebrew inscription, which explains that the wild man and the stag are one and the same being, namely Merlin, the counsellor of Arthur. Instantly the letters vanish.²

In examining this episode we have to take into consideration a group of stories represented in the following sources:— (1a) Straparola, *Piacevole Notti*; ³ (1b) *Mille et Un Quart d'Heures, Contes Tartares*; ⁴ (2) *Le Capitaine Lixur ou Le Satyr*,⁵ a Breton tale; (3) *Il Satiro*,⁶ a tale widely told among the Abruzzi; (4) *La Favele de lu Serpènde*,⁷ another version of the Abruzzi; (5) *Piera*,⁸ a Tuscan tale; (6a) *Belle-belle*, a story found in d'Aulnoy's collection; ⁹ (6b) *Fortunio*, an English version of the same story, included by Tabart in his collection of nursery stories.¹⁰ These last two, it should be said, are connected with our story more loosely than the others.¹¹ In these sources, a maiden, who has left her

¹ Greece is equivalent to *fairyländ* in the romances.

² Material that is extraneous to the story is omitted from the above summary; for example, certain prophecies of Merlin, and the story of his own birth.

Grisandole was incorporated by Nicholas de Troies (ca. 1535) into his collection of tales, which were drawn from a great variety of sources,—*Le Grand Paragon de Nouvelles Nouvelles* (ed. Mabilie, Brussels and Paris, 1866), pp. 169 ff. Merlin is not mentioned by name, however; "un homme" takes the form of the great stag. As a boar he comes to *Grisandole* in the forest, and tells her how to capture the wild man. Other minor differences occur.

³ IV, i.

⁴ *Cabinet des Fées*, Geneva, 1787, XXI, 304-321.

⁵ Luzel, *Contes populaires de la Basse-Bretagne*, Paris, 1887, pp. 314 ff.

⁶ De Nino, *Usi e Costumi abruzzesi*, Florence, 1883, III, 133 ff.

⁷ Finamore, *Tradizione popolari abruzzesi*, Lanciano, 1885, I, v.

⁸ De Gubernatis, *Rivista di Letteratura popolare*, I (1878), 81, 82.

⁹ *Cabinet des Fées*, IV, 5 ff.

¹⁰ *Popular Fairy Tales*, London, s. a., pp. 121 ff.

¹¹ Basile, *Pentamerone*, IV, vi, has been connected with *Grisandole* by Benfey, *Orient u. Occident*, I, 345. It diverges, however, too widely from our cycle to be of assistance here:—A maiden Marchetta, disguised as a squire, enters the service of a king, whose queen falls in love with her, and upon Marchetta's rejection of her proffers of love, accuses her unjustly to the king. He condemns Marchetta to death, but she is rescued by means of a

home,¹ disguised as a youth enters the service of a king, whose queen (3, daughter), except in *Piera*, *Belle-belle*, and *Fortunio*, has among her attendants youths disguised as maidens. The adventure of capturing in the forest a satyr (1b, a centaur; 4, a great serpent; 5, a wild man of the woods; 6, the adventure is the slaying of a dragon) is imposed upon the maiden by the king. He is induced to do this by the queen, who is in love with the youth, and has been repulsed by him (1, 2, 6); or by jealous attendants, who falsely tell the king that the page has boasted of being able to perform the adventure (3, 4, 5).² The maiden effects the capture by means of food, either

magic ring that she possesses, the true state of affairs is discovered, the queen is put to death, and the king marries Marchetta.

¹The inductions to the stories differ widely. In 1a, the heroine is a dowerless maiden who vows that she will remain single unless she can marry a king, and sets out to seek her fortune disguised as a man; in 1b, she is a disinherited princess, the granddaughter of an enchanter; in the course of many adventures she is separated from her lover, a prince, and for the sake of secrecy she assumes the garb of a man, and enters the service of the king of China. In 2 and 6, the heroine, to save her father from military duty, disguised as a youth enters in his stead the service of the king. Thus the introduction of these versions is connected with the wide-spread *märchen* of the *Warrior Maiden*, who under similar circumstances enters a king's service, and whose life is thereafter spent in harassing and ultimately fruitless efforts to conceal her true sex. See Köhler, *Jahrb. f. rom. u. engl. Lit.*, III (1861), 57, No. iv; Wenzig, *Westslav. Märchenschatz*, Leipzig, 1857, 228; Hahn, *Griechische Märchen*, Leipzig, 1864, I, No. 10; Ferraro, *Canti popolari monferrini*, Turin-Florence, 1870, No. 38; Widter-Wolf, *Volkslieder aus Venedig*, Vienna, 1864, No. 79. For many further references, see the notes to this last; also Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, Heilbrunn, 1879, p. 217. Cf. also, especially with *Capitaine Lixur*, another Breton tale, *Le Murli*, Luzel, *Contes populaires de la Basse-Bretagne*, II, 296 ff.; see below, p. 257, note.

In 3, the maiden has eloped with her lover, from whom she has been stolen by some thieves for the sake of her jewels; she escapes from them, and to avoid detection, she disguises herself as a man, and enters the service of the king. In 4, the heroine after her mother's death is sent dressed as a lad to the king by her grandmother; the introduction to the story is evidently defective. In 5, the heroine despairing of supporting her family by hard toil, sets out in the garb of a man to seek her fortune.

²From this point to the end of the story 6 diverges from the rest of the group.

binding her victim while he sleeps after drinking (1, 5), or while he is engaged in the act of eating and drinking (2, 3, 4). Between the time of his capture and his appearance before the court, the prisoner, except in *Piera*, laughs four (4, three) times :—when he first sees his captor (2, 3, 4), or when he hears the people of the palace greet her as a youth, (1), since he is aware of her sex ; again, either when he sees the funeral procession of a child, led by a priest, who he knows is its father, while the reputed father walks among the mourners weeping (1, 2) ; or when he witnesses the baptism of a child by a priest, who he knows is its father (3, 4) ; again, when he sees a crowd, in which there are many thieves, watching the hanging of a man who had stolen only ten florins for the support of his family (2, he weeps because he sees the devil waiting for the unrepentant soul) ; or when he sees a shipwreck, because he perceives an angel waiting for the souls of the crew (2) ; or when he crosses the public square, because he knows that there are pots of gold buried there, which may serve as his captor's dower (3) ; again, when he sees the queen (3, princess) and her attendants, who are really youths in disguise. He explains the reason for his laughter in the presence of the court, and thus reveals his captor's sex, and the queen's guilt.¹ The queen (princess) and her attendants are burned, and the king (1b, 3, the king's son), marries the maiden. In the *Piacevole Notti* the satyr is set free ; in the *Conte Tartare* the centaur vanishes after he has revealed the truth ; in *Capitaine Lixur*, the satyr is made prime minister ; in the other sources we hear no more about him.

¹ *Piera* here varies from the rest of the group. The wild man remains silent after his capture. Jealous attendants tell the king that *Piera* has boasted of his own ability to make the wild man speak, and the king bids him put his boast into effect. *Piera*, guided by the advice of a fay, walks thrice around the wild man in the presence of the court, and asks him why he will not speak. The wild man replies, "*Perchè tu sei una bella ragazza.*"

The following table, showing the important features of the story, and the sources in which they appear, will perhaps add to the clearness of our study. G. is used as the abbreviation for *Grisandole* :—

Disguised maiden in the service of a king.....	G	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5	.....	6a	.....	6b	.....
Disguised youths in the service of a queen.....	G	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	3 (princess)	4	.....	—	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....
Adventure suggested by the repulsed queen.....	—	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	6a	.....	6b	.....
Adventure suggested by the jealous attendants ¹.....	—	—	—	.....	—	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5	.....	—	.....	—	.....
Adventure imposed on the maiden by the king.....	—	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5	.....	6a	.....	6b	.....
Capture of a satyr.....	G (wild man)	1a	1b (centaur)	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4 (serpent)	5 (wild man)	6a and 6b (dragon)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
After he has taken food.....	G	1a	1b	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
While he is eating.....	—	—	—	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Laughter of the captive.....	G	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(1) On seeing his captor.....	G	—	—	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
On hearing her called a youth.....	—	1a	1b	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(2) At a funeral procession.....	—	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
At a baptism.....	—	—	—	.....	—	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
At some mendicants.....	G	—	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(3) At a hanging.....	—	1a	1b	.....	2 ²	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
On crossing a public square.....	—	—	—	.....	—	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
At a shipwreck.....	—	—	—	.....	2	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
At a squire who strikes his master.....	G	—	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(4) At the queen.....	G	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Captive's explanation of his laughter.....	G	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Punishment of the queen.....	G	1a	1b	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Marriage of the king and the maiden.....	G	1a	1b (prince)	.....	2	.....	3 (prince)	4	.....	5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

¹The jealous attendants have a place in 2, where they are instrumental in imposing a previous adventure on Lixur; also in *Piera*; see above, p. 238, note 1.

²The satyr's weeping here is merely a variant on his laughter at the same sight.

When we note the points of similarity in the various versions, we see that the *Conte Tartare* is a retelling of Straparola's tale, and that *Belle-belle* and *Fortunio* diverge in that part of the story which is especially important for our purposes,—the adventure with the satyr; hence we may eliminate the *Conte Tartare*, *Belle-belle*, and *Fortunio* from our study. It is noticeable also that the *Piacevole Notti* and *Capitaine Lixur* agree in certain features where they differ from the other sources,—the vindictive queen, the captive satyr (here 3 agrees with them), the laughter at the funeral procession, the laughter and the weeping at the hanging. We may then safely refer Straparola's story and the modern Breton tale to a common original, that may have passed into each through several mediums. Again, a glance at the resemblances noted above shows that the two versions of the Abruzzi are practically the same story, which together with *Piera* agrees now with the *Piacevole Notti* and now with *Capitaine Lixur*, and hence should pretty surely be ascribed to the same ultimate original as these latter.¹ What relation this original, which it will be convenient to term **x**, bears to *Grisandole*, it concerns us to determine. The appearance of the same theme and details in folk tales of the Abruzzi, Tuscany, and Brittany, the *Piacevole Notti*, and the *Merlin*, makes it seem *a priori* more probable that we are dealing with one of the common stock of folk tales than that the *Merlin*, the oldest version chronologically, is the source of any of the others, even of the *Piacevole Notti*, as Benfey and Schmidt have thought.²

An analysis of the *Story of Grisandole* itself also gives support to this probability. As soon as we attempt to frame

¹ The exact relation of these different sources to each other cannot, of course, be determined without a more elaborate study than is necessary here.

² See above, p. 234, note 1; Cf. *Storia di Martino*, ed. Sanesi, Bergamo, 1898, p. xxxiii; Rua, *Giornale Storico*, xvi (1890), 234 ff.

its main outline we see its complex nature. The cornerstone consists in the revelation to a husband of his wife's infidelity by means of the scornful laughter of a superhuman being. This theme is elaborated by the introduction of the disguised maiden who is instrumental in bringing about the *dénouement*, and of her capture of the wild man. The story, then, has three parts:—the betrayal of the faithless queen, the disguised maiden, and the capture of the wild man.

Benfey pointed out long ago¹ that the earliest source for the first part of the story is the *Çukasaptati* (*The Seventy Tales of a Parrot*),² an Indian collection, which is believed to have existed in its present form at least as early as the sixth century, and in its material is much earlier:—³

As Queen Kâmalilâ is breakfasting one morning with her royal husband, Vikramâditya, king of Uddschayinî, she declines some fish, saying that she is too fastidious to eat a male fish; whereupon the fish laughs loudly. The king bids his chief Brahmin, Purchita, on pain of banishment, discover within five days the cause of the fish's mirth. The Brahmin, in great perplexity, confides his trouble to his daughter, Bâlapanditâ, and she begs him to take her to Vikramâditya that she may give him the desired explanation. She informs the king at their first meeting that the fish had laughed because he had heard the queen's refusal to eat a male fish; but she gives him no further light on the subject, although he summons her before him on three successive days, on each of which she tells him a different tale that will serve as a warning not to press his inquiries further. Now it happened that some time before these events certain wise men had come to Uddschayinî to test the report that whenever Pushpahasa, the chief minister of Vikramâditya, laughed in the state council he let roses fall from his lips; Pushpahasa had not seen fit to give them an exhibition of his peculiar accomplishment,⁴ and consequently had been imprisoned by the king. On the fourth day when Bâlapanditâ comes into the king's presence,

¹ *Ausland*, XLIV (1858), 1040; *Orient u. Occident*, I (1862), 344 ff.

² *Die Çukasaptati*, translated by Schmidt, Kiel, 1894, pp. 11–23; for a summary, see *Orient u. Occident*, I, 346–352.

³ See Benfey, *Ausland*, XLV (1859), p. 459.

⁴ On beings who laugh roses, see J. and W. Grimm, *Altdeutsche Wälder*, Cassel and Frankfurt, 1813–1816, I, 73; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, Berlin, 1875–1878, p. 921, note 318.

she bids him find out from Pushpahasa why he had refused to laugh, and why the fish had laughed. Vikramāditya releases Pushpahasa, presents him with rich gifts, and then demands the reason why he had not laughed. Pushpahasa explains that he had not been in the mood for laughing, because his wife had been unfaithful to him. The king turns to the queen, and saying "Dost thou hear?" laughingly touches her with a spray of leaves. She at once falls fainting to the ground. Pushpahasa laughs. On the king's bidding him explain the reason, he says that he laughed because the queen had not fainted on the preceding night, when her lover had given her many blows, yet now she had swooned from the tap of a spray of leaves. To prove the truth of his words, he bids the king remove the queen's robe and discover the marks of the blows. The king searches the house, and finds the queen's lover hid in a chest. He puts him to death, and banishes the queen.¹

Different in detail though the stories of Kāmalīla and Julius Cæsar's queen are, they are alike in essential features. In both there appear the same set of principal actors, and the mysterious laughter² from a captive gifted with supernatural knowledge; in both the queen's unfaithfulness is revealed to the king through the instrumentality of a maiden. The noteworthy features in which the episodes differ are the king's forewarning dream, the youths disguised as maidens, the adventure of the disguised maiden, and the capture of Merlin.

The first of these, the dream of the king, is entirely too common a device in the amplification of a mediæval story for its presence here to require comment; although such a dream frequently forms an integral part of the narratives of the middle ages, it may be attached to any episode that offers an excuse for it to appear.³ The second feature, the

¹ Cf. the Persian translation of *Çukasaptati*, *Tuti-Nameh* (*Das Papagaian-buch*), translated from the Persian by Rosen, Leipzig, 1858, II, 71 ff.

² The fact that in the *Çukasaptati* the king's curiosity is stimulated by unexplained laughter from two sources, the dead fish and Pushpahasa, is probably due to the nature of the work, where, as in any collection of seventy tales, it is not remarkable that the same theme should be developed in more than one form.

³ Cf. the version from Sercambi, below, p. 244.

queen's lovers disguised as maidens, is plainly an Oriental development of the *Çukasaptati* story of the unfaithful queen. It has a place in the collection of tales made by Somadeva (ca. 1113-1125), the *Katha-sarit-sagara*,¹ in a tale which Benfey referred to the *Çukasaptati* as its source, and also in three other stories closely connected with the same theme. The most important for our purposes is a folk tale of Cashmere :—²

A dead fish laughs when a certain queen refuses to buy it of a fish-monger on the ground that it is male. The king thereupon commands his visir on pain of death to explain to him in six months why the fish laughed. The son of the visir goes out to search for some one who can find the explanation. On his way he joins an old countryman, and addresses him with questions apparently so absurd that the old man thinks him a fool. When they arrive at the countryman's cottage, the man's daughter explains to him the hidden meaning of the stranger's questions. At once the son of the visir demands that she tell him the reason why the fish had laughed ; and she

¹ *Die Märchensammlung des Somadeva*, translated by Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1843, I, 24 ff. For the date, see p. xii. The tale has been summarized by Liebrecht, *Orient und Occident*, I, 345 (Cf. also Benfey, *Ausland*, 1859, 4601) :—King Yogananda orders the execution of a certain Brahmin against whom his jealousy has been roused by seeing the queen show him some slight favor. As the Brahmin is led to execution a dead fish in the market place laughs aloud. The king postpones the execution until Vararuchi, a favorite of the god Siva, who has assumed a human form, shall have discovered the cause of the mysterious laughter. By the advice of the goddess Sarasvati, Vararuchi conceals himself at night in a palm tree where he overhears a *rakshasi* (i. e., ogress) relate to her children the story of the laughing fish, and explain to them that it had laughed because the king is jealous of the innocent Brahmin, when in reality there are in his palace many youths disguised as maidens, for whom his wives all indulge an unworthy passion. When the king hears Vararuchi's explanation, he sets the Brahmin free, and loads Vararuchi with honors.

In situation *Grisandole* is allied more nearly to the *Çukasaptati* than to Somadeva's tale ; for a fairly close parallel exists between Merlin and Pushpahasa, while that is much more remote which may perhaps be traced between Vararuchi and *Grisandole*, and, as Liebrecht suggests, between Merlin on one hand, and the *rakshasi*, Brahmin, and fish on the other.

² Knowles, *Folk Tales of Kashmir*, London, 1888, pp. 484-490.

replies that it was because the queen refused to buy a male fish, although she has in the palace a lover disguised as a maiden. The visir reports his son's explanation to the king, who arranges a test that enables him to discover which one of the queen's supposed ladies is in reality a man. The son of the visir marries the wise maiden.

The other two sources are *Scha'ascherim*,¹ the work of Giuseppe Sabara, a twelfth-century Hebrew poet of Spain, and one of Sercambi's *Novelle*.² They relate the same story, without the laughter of the fish, and with the forewarning dream of the king. They have been referred by Köhler³ to a common source, which seems to be the same ultimately as that of the Cashmere tale, which is evidently a retelling of the material that we first know through the *Çukasaptati*. Whatever questions may arise as to their interrelations, all are too closely connected in general theme and outline with *Grisandole*⁴ not to be of assistance in analyzing it, for they show clearly that it is a composite, and that the story of Grisandole herself, and the capture of the wild man are not inherent parts of the main narrative.

It is noticeable that in all of the Oriental stories, which we may regard as belonging to one branch of the family, it is a maiden gifted with supernatural knowledge, who explains the meaning of the mysterious laughter or of the perplexing dream.⁵ Thus they touch closely the widely diffused story known as the *Clever Lass*, in which a maiden, to quote from Professor Child, "wins a husband, or sometimes a crown by guessing riddles, solving difficult but

¹ See Köhler, *Giorn. Stor.*, XIV (1889), 94 ff.

² Sercambi, *Novelle (De Magna Prudentia)*, ed. Renier, Turin, 1889, pp. 22 ff.

³ *Giorn. Stor.* XIV, 96 ff.

⁴ Cf. *Ib.*, 98.

⁵ Even in Somadeva, whose story is not so closely related to the other tales of the group as they are to each other, it is a *rakshasi* from whom Vararuchi derives his information.

practicable problems, or matching or evading impossibilities.”¹ It is clear then that Grisandole herself should be the person to solve the king’s difficulty, and that in so far as she is a disguised maiden and gives proof of her accomplishments by capturing a wild man, she is an importation from another source²—from such a story, for example, as the Cashmere *Tale of a Princess* :—³

A princess, having first arrayed herself in her husband’s clothes, succeeds in releasing him as well as his parents from captivity, when by the fortunes of war they have been driven from their land. Having accomplished this feat she leaves them, and still in the garb of a man wanders to another country, where she enters the service of a merchant, whose sons are invariably devoured by a *dagin* (*i. e.*, ogress) the night after their birth. The princess at the request of the merchant watches at the door of the chamber the next time that a son is born, seizes the *dagin*, and spares her life only on condition that she never trouble the house again. The merchant gives his sister to the supposed youth in marriage, and in the course of time a revelation of the true sex of the princess ensues.

Some such independent narrative as this, in which the disguised maiden performs for the king a difficult adventure

¹ Child, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Boston and New York, 1882–1898, I, 1 ; see p. 1–3, 7–14 for a collection of examples, and a discussion of this theme. See also, Benfey, *Ausland*, 1852, pp. 457, 486, 511, 567, 589.

² That the Clever Lass might easily at no late stage have come to be represented as assuming a man’s garb before going to court is clear from Sercambi’s version, which, although it introduces late features, keeps on the whole pretty close to earlier models. Cf. also that branch of the cycle of the *Clever Lass*, in which the wise lady is a wife whose husband leaves her for a distant land, after demanding that she perform in his absence three apparent impossibilities. In the guise of a man she follows him, takes service with him, and performs the tasks that he has imposed. Her adventures have nothing in common with that of Grisandole. See Suchier, *Germania*, xx (1875), 283 ; Köhler, *Ib.*, xxi (1876), 18 ff. Cf. also the clever lass in *Die beiden Fürsten* (Radloff, *Proben der Volksliteratur der türkischen Stämme Süd-Iberiens*, I, 197), who releases her father-in-law from prison by guessing riddles, disguised as one of his friends.

³ Knowles, *Folk Tales of Kashmir*, London, 1888, pp. 59 ff.

through which her true sex is discovered, has evidently been used in the source of *Grisandole* to expand the betrayal of the faithless queen through the agency of the clever lass.¹

The maiden's difficult adventure brings us to the third part of our episode :—a mortal captures a woodland deity, after having stupified him by a surfeit of food or wine, and then compels him to reveal hidden wisdom as a price for his freedom. This theme is at least as old as the time of Theopompus, who tells of the capture of Silenus by the shepherds of King Midas, who induced the god in return for his freedom to reveal to him the secret nature of the universe.² In Roman mythology Faunus and Picus are captured in the same way by Numa, and in modern folk tales the peasant, who would take prisoner a wild man of the woods, and wrest from him some coveted knowledge, resorts to the same measures.³ This is, accordingly, too universal a feature to be significant. It is noteworthy, however, that in the Talmudic account of the capture of the spirit Aschmedai by Benajah, the servant of King Solomon, who wishes to learn from Aschmedai where he may find the Schamir, Benajah takes him prisoner by filling with wine the well from which

¹ In a variant of the story (see *Id.*, *ib.*, pp. 61 ff.) a princess enters the service of a king, for whom she slays a large *ajdar*, that appears in the land and destroys many lives. The king gives her his daughter in marriage. Cf. also with this story those of the *Warrior Maid* cited above, p. 237, note 1 ; also that of a Celtic other-world princess, MacInnes and Nutt, *Folk and Hero Tales*, London, 1890, pp. 2 ff.

² Aelian, *Var. Hist.*, III, 18.

³ Cf. Meyer, *Indogermanischen Mythen*, Berlin, 1883, I, 153 ff. ; Grünbaum, *Zs. der morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, XXXI (1877), 218 ; Mannhardt, *Wald- u. Feldkulte*, Berlin, 1875–1877, I, 97, 98, 112, 113 ; II, 117 ff., 137 ff. ; Laistner, *Das Räthsel der Sphinx*, Berlin, 1889, II, 204, 205 ; Rhode, *Der griechische Roman*, Leipzig, 1900, 222 ff. ; Zingerle, *Sagen aus Tyrol*, Innsbruck, 1891, No. 187, 191 ; Schneller, *Märchen u. Sagen aus Wälsch-Tyrol*, Innsbruck, 1867, p. 210 ; Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, London, 1894–1896, III, 51–54.

he is in the habit of drinking, and thus making him sleep a drunken sleep, in which he is easily bound.¹ As Aschmedai is being led captive to Solomon, he laughs three times, apparently without provocation.² This combination of the capture by wine and the mysterious laughter appears, in early sources, to be peculiar to the Aschmedai legend, and so gives us excellent reason for classifying the third part of *Grisandole* as, like the first and second, Oriental in its primitive sources.

II.

As we review the story of *Grisandole* with its three component elements—the unfaithful queen, the disguised maiden, and the capture of the wild man—clearly before us, we see that they are awkwardly put together. The conduct of both Merlin and Grisandole is absolutely lacking in motive. Grisandole, unlike the typical clever lass, has neither been summoned to help the king in his perplexity, nor has she volunteered to do so; and she engages eagerly in an adventure, the reward for which—the hand of Julius Cæsar’s daughter—must, she knows, in the nature of things, bring embarrassment upon herself. Merlin, however kindly disposed he may have been to Julius Cæsar, has no apparent reason for his mad rush as a stag through the town, or for assuming the form of a wild man and submitting to a mode of capture, which he himself directs, simply in order to reveal the queen’s guilt. The irrelevancy of his part becomes all the more evident, when we compare *Grisandole* with our parallel folk tales. These are consistent in the very parts of the narrative that in the *Merlin* are inconsistent. The expe-

¹ Talmud, *Gittin*, 68. See Vogt, *Salman u. Morolf*, Halle, 1880, 213–217, for a summary; Cassel, *Schamir*, Erfurt, 1856, p. 62.

² See below, p. 262, on the mysterious laughter.

dition of the disguised maiden to capture the wild man is given a sufficient motive in the *Piacevole Notti* and *Capitaine Licur*, one that has a place in other narratives¹ of the unfaithful queen, who falls in love with a squire, and on discovering his loyalty to the king makes trouble for him. This theme, which is as old as the story of Potiphar's wife, would assuredly afford the most natural means of connecting the two distinct narratives that are combined in the Grisandole episode. That the queen should insist upon the adventure destined to reveal her own guilt to the king satisfies the dramatic irony of the situation.² The introduction of jealous fellow-servants into the versions of the Abruzzi is a not unnatural variant from this original, and one that evidently had a place in the source of *Piera*, where it is due to the machinations of jealous fellow-servants not only that *Piera*, as a result of her reputed boastfulness, is sent out to capture the wild man, but also that her true sex is finally revealed.³ It is evident, then, that our folk tales preserve a more connected and clearer form of narrative than that contained in the romance, and one which we may feel confident appeared in **x**. It is evident also that **x** is not a reworking of *Grisandole*, but that the latter must be a redaction of **x**, from which its important variations occur in those parts where *Grisandole*'s career touches Merlin's.

Naturally we are led to suspect that these variations are due to already existing Merlin material. Of this material we find indications in more than one episode of the *Vita*

¹ A familiar example of this is found in the lays of *Guingamor* and *Lanval*; also in the Italian poem *Pulzella Gaia*.

² The combination of the two situations—the faithless queen in love with disguised youths, and the king marrying the disguised maiden—is probably due to some narrator who wished to keep the conjugal balance even.

³ See Nerucci, *Sessanta Novelle popolari Montalesi*, Florence, 1880, pp. 341 ff., for the story of a youth in a king's service, who is involved in a series of difficult adventures through the jealousy of his fellow-servants.

Mertini, a Latin poem of some fifteen hundred hexameters, now usually attributed to Geoffrey of Monmouth.¹ The first of these episodes for us to examine we shall find it convenient to term *Merlin and Guendoloena's Lover* : — ²

Merlin, the mad king and prophet of Dimetia, has been dwelling in voluntary exile in the Caledonian forest. His wife, Guendoloena, is living in the meantime at the court of his brother-in-law, Rodarchus, king of the Cumbri, whither Merlin goes for a brief visit. When he is ready to return to the forest, Guendoloena entreats him to remain with her, but he refuses to listen to her, declaring that he wishes to be free from the cares of love, and giving her permission to take another husband. He warns her, however, that if she does so, her new lover had best beware of meeting him, and adds that on her wedding day he will appear, and bestow upon her a lavish dowry. With this reassuring promise Merlin returns to the forest. Some years later he perceives from the courses of the stars that Guendoloena is about to marry again. At once he summons a herd of stags about him, and mounted on a stag's back, and driving the rest of the herd before him, he rides to court on Guendoloena's wedding-day, and bids her come forth from the palace to see the gift that he has brought her. At that moment the prospective bridegroom chances to come to one of the palace windows; instantly Merlin tears the horns from the head of the stag that he is riding, hurls them at his rival, and kills him. Then at full speed he dashes away to the forest, but in his haste he falls into a stream, where the crowd of pursurers whom Rodarchus has sent out after him overtake him. They lead him back in chains to court, and Rodarchus seeing that he is profoundly melancholy gives orders that he be entertained and diverted. Nothing more is heard of Guendoloena.

“Such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff” is this episode made up of, that one is almost inclined to attach little importance to it. But it is easy to see that Merlin is represented here in a traditional predicament of enchanters.

¹ Ed. Michel and Wright, Paris, 1837; San Marte, *Sagen von Merlin*, Halle, 1853, pp. 273 ff. The authorship and the date have been made the subjects of extensive discussion. In general the date is now fixed at ca. 1148. See *Vita Mertini*, pp. xcvi ff.; Ward, *Catalogue of Romances*, London, 1883–1893, I, 278 ff.; Lot, *Annales de Bretagne*, xv, (1899–1900), 332–336; Mead, *Outlines of the History of the Legend of Merlin (English Merlin, Pt. IV)*, London, 1899, p. xciii.

² Vv. 404–472.

His rôle is clearly that of the supernatural being, whose wife has deserted him for a mortal lover, from whom he tries to separate her. In a similar situation we find the Celtic enchanter Mongan, in the *Serc Duibe Lacha do Mongan* (*Dub-Lacha's Love for Mongan*) a narrative contained in the *Book of Fermoy*, a fifteenth-century manuscript, which, however, in its material is as old as the twelfth century : —¹

The famous enchanter, Mongan, the son of Manannan mac Lir, in return for a fine herd of kine belonging to the king of Leinster has promised to grant the king any boon that he may ask. The king demands Mongan's wife, Dubh-Lacha, and Mongan's honor requires that he keep his word. Dubh-Lacha accompanies the king of Leinster to his court, but obtains from him the respite of a year before she becomes his wife. Twice while the king of Leinster is absent from home, Mongan tries to win back Dubh-Lacha. At last at the end of the year on the day of the wedding feast, he transforms himself into Aedh, the son of the king of Connaught, Mac an Daimh, his servant, into Aedh's attendant, and a hag into a beautiful lady whom he calls his wife, and thus riding to court he wins a cordial welcome from the king of Leinster. At the banquet by a charm he makes the king of Leinster fall in love with the transformed hag, and suggest to Aedh an exchange of wives. Aedh, of course, agrees, hastens away with Mac an Daimh and Dubh-Lacha at full speed, and in the morning removes the enchantment from the hag, so that the king discovers that he has been duped.

The parallel, though very far from close, is evident. Here as in the *Vita Merlini*, it is with the enchanter's consent, in fact as the result of his own deed that he loses his wife to the mortal; here, too, he comes riding to court on the wedding day in time to take a less extreme, but certainly a bitter vengeance on his rival.

An earlier instance of the same situation is found in the *Serglige Conchulaind*,² where Manannan mac Lir, the great

¹See Meyer and Nutt, *Voyage of Bran*, London, 1895-97, I, 72, 73; *Proc. R. I. Acad.*, *Irish MSS.* Series, I, i, 36 ff.

²Windisch, *Irische Texte*, Leipzig, 1880, pp. 197 ff.; Translated into English by O'Curry, *Atlantis*, I, 363 ff.; into German, Zimmer, *Zs. f. vergl.*

otherworld lord, knowing of an assignation between his wife, Fand, and her mortal lover, Cuchulinn, comes to their trysting place, riding over the billows, the Horseman of the Hairy Sea, invisible yet wonderfully beautiful. Without delay or resistance Fand forsakes Cuchulinn to follow her immortal husband back to the other world. Yet again in early and very famous Irish material, the *Tochmarc Etaine*, we read of the efforts of Mider of Bri Leith, one of the most important of Celtic fairy kings, to separate his wife, the fay, Etaine, from Eochaid Airem, king of Erin, whose wife she had become.¹

In *Guendoloena's Lover*, then, we find Merlin in circumstances analogous, though, be it said, not closely parallel to those in which the great Celtic enchanters, Mongan, Manannan, and Midir are placed; namely, he is represented as the enchanter, whose wife has been taken from him by a mortal, from whom he seeks to regain her, and on whom he executes vengeance. So much is clear at first sight. The most striking and apparently incomprehensible feature in *Guendoloena's Lover* is Merlin's extraordinary appearance as a herdsman of stags over which he exercises wonderful control. To understand this part of the episode we must in the first place have in mind a clear picture of Merlin's nature in the *Vita Merlini*. Grief has deprived him of reason, and he flees from the court to the forest:—

Ingrediturque nemus, gaudetque latere sub ornīs;
Miraturque feras pascentes gramina saltus.
Nunc has insequitur, nunc cursu præterit illas.

Sprachf., xxviii (1887), 595 ff.; into French, d'Arbois de Jubainville, *Ep. Celt.*, I, 174-216; summarized, Meyer and Nutt, *Voyage of Bran*, I, 153-158.

¹ For a summary of this tale see Zimmer, *Zs. f. vergl. Sprachf.*, xxviii (1883-1887), 587 ff.; d'Arbois de Jubainville, *Cours de Littérature Celtique*, II, 312-322. Cf. also Kittredge, *Arthur and Gorlagon (Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, VIII)*, p. 196, note 1.

Utitur herbarum radicibus, utitur herbis ;
 Utitur arboreo fructu, morisque rubeti.
 Fit silvester homo, quasi silvis editus esset,
 Inde per aetatem totam ; nullique repertus,
 Oblitusque sui, cognatorumque suorum,
 Delituit, silvis obductus more ferino.¹

 Fons erat in summo cuiusdam vertice montis,
 Undique praeinctus corulis densisque fructetis.
 Illic Merlinus conserat : inde per omnes
 Spectabat silvas, cursusque iocosque ferarum.²

He hears of Guendoloena's approaching marriage, and declares that he is resolved to prevent it.

Dixerat ; et silvas et saltus circuit omnes ;
 Cervorumque greges agmen collegit in unum,
 Et dames capreasque simul ; cervoque resedit ;
 Et veniente die, compellans agmina prae se,
 Festinans vadit quo nubit Guendoloena.
 Postquam venit eo, patienter stare coegit
 Cervos ante fores, proclamans "Guendoloena !
 Guendoloena, veni ! te talia munera spectant."
 Ocius ergo venit subridens Guendoloena,
 Gestarique virum cervo miratur, et illum
 Sic parere viro, tantum quoque posse ferarum
 Uniri numerum, quas prae se solus agebat
 Sicut pastor oves quas ducere suevit ad herbas.³

Merlin here is distinctly depicted as *silvester homo*, a wild man of the woods. His herd of beasts and his complete control over them place him beside the man of the woods of Celtic folklore, the giant herdsman, one of the prominent figures in the other world. In one of our earliest Celtic sources for a picture of fairyland, the *Imram Maelduin*,⁴ we meet him, a huge creature, resembling a beast himself, guarding a herd of beasts whom he has the power to seize fiercely, maim, and even devour. We find him again, resem-

¹ Vv. 75 ff.² Vv. 138 ff.³ Vv. 451 ff.⁴ Baist, *Zs. f. deutsches Alterthum*, xxxiii, 100.

bling Merlin more closely, as the Black Man of the Wood in the Welsh *Lady of the Fountain*.¹ He is the "woodward of that wood;" he sits on a mound in the centre of a large sheltered glade, and a thousand wild animals graze around him. "Then I asked him what power he had over those animals. . . . And he took his club in his hand, and with it he struck a stag a great blow so that it brayed vehemently, and at his braying the animals came together, as numerous as the stars in the sky, so that it was difficult for me to find room in the glade to stand among them. . . . And he looked at them, and bade them go and feed; and they bowed their heads, and did him homage as vassals to their lord. Then the black man said to me, 'Seest thou now, little man, what power I hold over these animals?'" Again in the speech of the giant herdsman in Chrétien's *Yvain*, we are reminded of Merlin as he wrenches the horns from the stag's head:—

Car quant j'an puis une tenir
 As poinz que j'ai et durs et fors,
 Si la destraing pas les deus cors
 Que las autres de peor tranblent.²

The giant herdsman, as Professor A. C. L. Brown has pointed out, is unquestionably one of the shape-shifters whom the fay, the ruler of the Celtic other world, stations at the entrance to her domains, to test the courage of the mortal visitor, and to point him on the path to an adventure that will prove his fitness to enter her abode. An enchanter, he was doubtless originally himself one of the lords of the

¹ Guest, *Mabinogion*, London, 1849, I, 45, 46.

² Vv. 346-349. Cf. also the giant herdsman in the fifteenth-century German poem, *Der Ring* (cited by Uhland, *Schriften*, Stuttgart, 1866, III, 53), who rides to battle on a great stag, strikes down his foes with his iron club and bites them to death with his tusklike teeth, while his stag pierces them with his horns.

other world, who as the fay came to be regarded more and more completely as the dominating influence of fairydom, was relegated to the position of a mere creature of hers and a guide to her domain.¹ It is very clear that Merlin, the wild man of the woods, the complete master of the stags of the forest, who obey his bidding, whom he gathers about him and drives before him, from one of whom he ruthlessly tears the horns, is the same sort of being as the giant herdsman of romance, euhemerized though he has been in our source, where there is no trace of the fairy guide.² He is plainly the shape-shifter, assuming the form of the giant herdsman, even as Manannan took that of the invisible horseman, and Mongan that of Aedh, and coming, like these beings, to separate his wife from his mortal rival.³ We need not hesitate, then, to recognize in *Guendoloea's Lover* the indications of an early story of Merlin, in which he was represented, in accordance with a very early conception of the otherworld lord, as assuming a common fairy guise, when he came as giant herdsman to take vengeance upon his rival.

Although the giant herdsman and the wild man of the

¹ See Brown, *Iwain (Studies and Notes, VIII)*, ch. v, sect. iii; *Publ. Mod. Lang. Ass.*, xx (1905), 682-686.

² A discussion of other episodes in the romances where Merlin appears as a giant herdsman, since they are irrelevant to *Grisandole*, is postponed to the Appendix.

³ It should be said that in Celtic material we do not find the giant herdsman as such under similar circumstances. He is essentially a guide to the other world. But we have an example of an enchanter appearing in the same shape when he acts as otherworld guide, and when he comes to earth in pursuit of his runaway wife. In the *Imram Bran* (Meyer and Nutt, *Voyage of Bran*, sect. 32-60), no less a person than Manannan mac Lir, the supreme lord of the other world, acts as guide to the Land of Women, riding over the waves toward Bran to tell him of the beauties of Emain whither he directs him; and in the same form Manannan appears in the *Serlige Conchulaind*, when he comes to take Fand away from Cuchulinn.

woods are practically identical figures, Merlin's part in *Grisandole*, it is needless to say, could not possibly have been derived from *Guendoloena's Lover*; and it is not until we compare these episodes with an apparently different type of story that we understand their relation to each other. Of this type we find a representative preserved in a modern Celtic tale, *The Scolloge's Son from Muskerry*:¹—

The daughter of the king of Greece (*i. e.*, fairyland) marries the eldest of three brothers, the Sighe Draoi, powerful masters in the Druidic art. One day shortly after the Druid has brought his bride to his own country, as he is hunting, his hounds give chase to a wild man, whom he rescues from them, brings home, and has taught to speak. The wild man is, however, in reality a transformed humpback, a follower of the Druid's younger brother, who because of an old grudge has sent him to his brother's court to win the affection of the princess away from the Druid. In this he is successful, but unfortunately for him one day he is surprised with the princess by the Druid. He is burned as a punishment for his misdeeds, and the daughter of the king of Greece is taken back by her father to her own land.²

It has been demonstrated by Professor Kittredge³ that this modern Celtic tale embodies an early Irish theme similar in general plan to the *Tochmarc Etaine*; and that behind the transformations which the story has undergone we should recognize in the wild man of the woods the heroine's fairy lover, who has assumed this form and followed her to this world in order to win her back from the mortal whose home she has honored with her presence. It is in other words the same type of story as that of which we have a rationalized version in *Guendoloena's Lover*; in both the fairy lover in the form of a man of the woods comes in pursuit of his

¹ Kennedy, *Legendary Fiction of the Irish Celts*, London, 1866, pp. 255 ff.

² For two other versions of this story, in which a captured wild man is the lover of the wife of his captor, who has made a servant of him, see Larminie, *West Irish Folk Tales and Romances*, London, 1893, pp. 10 ff., note, p. 255; Kittredge, *Arthur and Gorlagon*, pp. 274, 275.

³ Kittredge, as above, pp. 188-190, 195, 261.

wife who has bestowed her affection upon a mortal.¹ In the light of this narrative Merlin's part in the elaborate story of *Grisandole* becomes suddenly clear, and many inconsistencies in the latter are explained. We recognize without difficulty that here again Merlin is appearing in an early rôle as the fairy lover of a supernatural maiden who has left him for a mortal husband, and whom he seeks to win back for himself, taking the form of a wild man, and naturally court-capture as the means of being reunited to his love.² This

¹A modern Highland tale, *The Chest* (Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, Paisley and London, 1890-1893, II, 9 ff.) should be compared with *Grisandole*.—A certain king, believing in a false charge against his bride, suspects her of infidelity to him. He accordingly leaves the country. His innocent wife, distressed at his absence, dresses herself as a man, rows away to a neighboring land, and there enters a gentleman's service as stable gillie. Every night a herd of wild beasts guarded by a wild man come to an empty barn owned by her master. She wishes to capture the wild man, and finally succeeds in doing so by stealing the key of the barn door, and lying in concealment until the man and his herd are in the barn, when she shuts the door and makes him prisoner. When his beard is shaved off, she recognizes him as her husband, but he does not recognize her. At her request her master employs him to help her about the stables, and later she gets permission to go home to see her friends, taking the wild man with her. After several adventures he recognizes her, and is finally convinced of her innocence; "and they were as they were before."

This story is connected in its structure with *Le Roman du Roi Flore et de la belle Jehan*, *Le Roman de Violet*, *Cymbeline*, Boccaccio, *Dec.*, 2 gior., No. 9, and the large cycle to which these tales belong. Cf. Campbell, *Tales*, II, 22; Paris, *Zs. des Vereins f. Volkskunde*, XIII, 1903, 141, n. 2. But we cannot fail to observe that in the capture of the wild man by his runaway and disguised wife we have the same theme that appears in so different a setting in the story of *Grisandole's* capture of Merlin.

²It is plain that the story of Merlin as the wild man, or giant herdsman, coming in pursuit of his bride had been modified before it was incorporated into *Grisandole*. It is important to notice that, although in some of the parallel folk tales, the heroine is helped in her task for some special reason by the advice or gift of a supernatural being (Ib, 2, 4, 5), Merlin, the object of pursuit, himself directs *Grisandole* how to capture him. Here the story seems to have been influenced by a widely diffused class of folk tales in which a captured wild man is a being under a spell, to obtain

episode has been incorporated into our **x**, a story that did not permit the preservation of the original ending. The

release from which he has submitted to capture or even sought it, although he is restive under it (see Grimm, *Der Eisenhaus, Kinder- u. Hausmärchen*, Göttingen, 1857, II, 242 ff.; Straparola, *Piacevole Notti*, v, 1; Sommer, *Sagen, Märchen, u. Gebräuche aus Sachsen u. Thüringen*, Halle, 1846, I, 86, 131 ff.; Vulpus, *Ammenmärchen*, Weimar, 1791, pp. 175 ff.; Milenowsky, *Volksmärchen aus Böhmen*, Breslau, 1853, pp. 147 ff.; Dietrich, *Russische Volksmärchen*, Leipzig, 1831, No. 10, pp. 131 ff.; *Cabinet des Fées*, v, 81-101; *Le Murlu* cited below, on this page). Merlin's directions to Grisandole as to how she shall proceed in order to capture him remind us forcibly of Tam Lin's advice to Janet, his love, whom he came back to earth to meet, after he had been carried off by the Queen o' Fairies. At midnight of Hallowe'en Janet must wait at a given place, past which the Queen o' Fairies and her cavalcade, Tam among them, will ride.

"Then win me, win me, an ye will,
For well I wot ye may."

If Janet will pull him from his horse, and hold him fast without fear, no matter into what shape he may turn, he will at length assume his true form, and be released from enchantment (Child, *Ballads*, I, 325-338). It is thus perhaps not unjustifiable to assume that Merlin, who in an earlier version appeared as the wild man coming in quest of his love, was regarded as the victim of enchantments, from which he was seeking to be released. With this possibility, cf. the early fairy-mistress story that may have been one of the sources of the *Vita Merlini*; see L. A. Paton, *Modern Language Notes*, XVIII (1903), 163 ff.

A story that is reported by Luzel (*Contes populaires de la Basse Bretagne*, Paris, 1887, II, 296 ff.), entitled *Le Murlu ou l'Homme Sauvage*, is of interest here. In its introduction, which agrees exactly with that of *Capitaine Lixur*, it belongs, as I have said (p. 237, n. 1), to the *Warrior Maid* stories. The three daughters of an aged lord obtain their father's permission to go in turn to court, disguised as soldiers, to offer their services to the king in their father's stead. The father disguises himself as a robber, waylays his daughters in turn, and frightens the eldest and the second into returning home. The youngest is not frightened, but spurs on to court. When she has entered the service of the king, the queen falls in love with her. From this point the story is entirely different from *Capitaine Lixur*. In *Le Murlu* the queen dies in consequence of the page's indifference; no adventure is imposed upon the maiden, whose sex the king discovers later through a false charge made by one of the court ladies against her; the king marries her, and they have one son. A remarkable creature, described

clever lass should marry the king, or the son of the king, whom she has helped; hence Grisandole does not accompany her fairy lover when he leaves the court, but remains there as the consort of Julius Cæsar.

III.

The most striking variations in detail in the sources for our episode are the occasions for the wild man's laughter. In all except *Piera*, where he does not laugh at all, he laughs at the thought of his captor's sex, and at the unfaithful queen. These features then we may be sure appeared in **x**; in fact the last was an inherent part of the theme. In all the versions he laughs on two intervening occasions: in the *Piacevole Notti* and *Capitaine Lixur* the first of these is when he sees the funeral procession; in the two versions of the Abruzzi, when he sees the baptism. The laughter at the funeral procession is probably to be referred to the legend of Aschmedai as its ultimate source. One of the three occasions for Aschmedai's laughter as Benajah leads him captive to Solomon¹ is when he sees a wedding procession, for he knows that the bridegroom will live only thirty days, and that the bride will have to wait thirteen years before her leviratical marriage. It seems reasonable to suppose that the funeral was substituted for the marriage procession,

as a "Murlu, un animal des plus redoutables" is found in the woods by the people of the court. It can be captured only by being entrapped into a cage with a bait of meat, cakes, and wine, and then imprisoned there. (The rest of the story belongs to the same class as Grimm's *Der Eiserne Mann*. Only the ending of the story need detain us. Here we learn that the Murlu is in reality the former queen, who has been enchanted into this form as a punishment for her temptation of the page, and who fortunately for the other people concerned, disappears, when by the deeds of the king's son, she has been released from the spell.

¹ See above, p. 246.

when the story of Aschmedai was retold in the occident, in order to give it a turn that would cast a jibe at the priesthood, and that the baptism is merely a later variant of the same feature. Probably, then, the funeral procession belonged in **x**,¹ and the author of the *Merlin* discarded it from *Grisandole*. His reason for doing so is obvious, for he had already used it in that part of his romance which is based upon the prose redaction of Robert de Borron's *Merlin*, in an episode to which I shall return.² The laughter at the hanging and at the shipwreck, which have a place in the *Piacevole Notti* and *Capitaine Lixur* bear plainly the marks of being late introductions into the material; and the laughter at the buried gold that might serve as a dower for the maiden in *Il Satiro* looks like a late rendering of an early theme—the laughter at the beggars clamoring for alms, when gold is buried in the ground beneath their feet,—which appears in the *Merlin*, and which might easily have crept into this tale of the Abruzzi in an altered form. The wild man's laughter at these beggars and at the squire in the chapel are peculiar to *Grisandole*. To understand the first we must again have recourse to the *Vita Merlini*,³ where more than once Merlin indulges in mysterious and unexplained laughter. The first occasion occurs much earlier in the poem than the episode of *Guendoloena's Lover*, in the story of *Ganieda and the Leaf*:—

Merlin has been induced by messengers from his sister, Ganieda, to return from the forest to the court of Rodarchus, Ganieda's husband. He has been at court but a short time when he feels a frenzied longing for the woods. Rodarchus tries to bribe him by costly gifts to remain

¹ Considering the well-known tendency of folk tales to group actions as well as individuals in sets of three, we are justified in assuming that in **x** or its source, the prisoner laughed, not four, but three times; namely, on seeing his captor, at a funeral procession, and at the queen.

² See below, p. 264.

³ *Vv.* 198–415.

with him, but finding these of no avail, he orders that Merlin be put into chains. Merlin forthwith refuses to speak a word or to smile. Ganieda enters the hall, and is received with endearments by the king, who, espying a leaf caught in her hair, removes it with a jest. Merlin laughs. Rodarchus by gifts and entreaties tries to induce him to tell the reason for his laughter, but he refuses to do so until the king has promised him his liberty in return for his information. Then he explains that he had laughed because the king was more faithful to the queen than she to him; for the leaf had fallen on her hair, while she was passing her time with a lover in a thicket. The queen protests that she is innocent, and in order to convict her brother of falsehood, she arranges a series of tests, by which Merlin is led to prophecy three different deaths for one lad. Thus she apparently succeeds in establishing her own innocence and Merlin's unreliability. Merlin thereupon tries again to escape to the forest. Ganieda and Guendoloena entreat him to remain, but he refuses to listen to them, and makes his way back to the woods. Later the lad is killed under circumstances combining the three causes of death predicted by Merlin.

Lot has treated at length,¹ as Ward had cursorily before him,² the parallelisms between the *Vita Merlini* and the history of Lailoken, a mad prophet of the Caledonian forest, our information in regard to whom is contained in two fragments of a Cottonian manuscript published by Ward. The parallelism is striking between *Ganieda and the Leaf* and an episode that is told of Lailoken, and Lot has pointed out that the author of the *Vita Merlini* was simply transferring to Merlin's name a tradition that he knew through the history of Lailoken :³—

Lailoken, after capture in the Caledonian forest, the circumstances of which are not related, is brought in chains to Meldred, the lord of Dunmeller, in order that he may prophesy before him. He maintains a profound silence for three days, and then laughs at seeing the king remove a leaf from the queen's hair, when she enters the hall. He explains the reason for his laughter only when the king promises him as a reward his freedom, and also that after his death, which he predicts will be threefold,

¹ *Annales de Bretagne*, xv (1899-1900), 336-347, 532, 533, 536.

² *Rom.*, xxii (1898), 509, 510, 593.

³ Contained in the second fragment published by Ward, *Rom.*, xxii, 522 ff.

he may be buried at the confluence of the Pausayl and Tweed. The queen, on hearing his revelation of her guilt, tries to persuade the king that a man who has foretold such an impossibility as a triple death is not worthy of credence; not succeeding, however, in convincing her husband by her arguments, she plots to bring about Lailoken's death. Several years later Lailoken is attacked in the neighborhood of Dunmeller by some shepherds, who have been incited against him by the queen, and is killed by them in the manner that he had predicted.

With the story of Queen Kâmalîla from the *Çukasaptati*, that I have cited above, in mind, it is pretty clear that the episode itself is Oriental in origin. It is moreover noticeable that although both the *Vita Merlini* and the story of Lailoken preserve the essential features of the Indian tale,—the persistent silence of the prisoner, his supernatural knowledge, and his betraying laughter aroused by a spray of leaves—the story of Lailoken in contrast to that of Merlin has a distinctly Oriental character in the frequent introduction of maxims into the dialogue, and in its tone of bitterness against women,—features, both of which, it is well known, are characteristic of Oriental tales.¹ Moreover, in the Lailoken material the story has a suitable and consistent conclusion, which is altogether lacking in the *Vita Merlini*. Meldred's queen and the queen of Vikramâditya do not convince their husbands of their innocence, as Ganiëda

¹ See *Rom.*, xxii, 523, 524: Lailoken says to the king:—"Tu me cepisti. et vinciri loris iussisti, gliscens nouum aliquod audire oraculum. Quapropter problema nouum de noua tibi proponam materia. De veneno stillauit dulcedo, et de melle amaritudo. Sed neutrum ita licet verum manet vtrumque. . . . Bonum pro malo fecit iniquitas. e conuerso reddidit pietas. Sed neutrum ita licet verum manet vtrumque." When the chains have been removed from Lailoken, he says:—"Quid est amarius felle muliebri, quod ab inicio serpentino infectum est veneno? Quid autem dulcius iusticie censura per quam mites et humiles a felle impiorum defenduntur? . . . Tunc iniquitas fecit bonum, cum mulier nequam suum veneretur proditorem. Tunc pietas fecit malum. quando vir iustus suum fidelem occidit amicum."

Cf. *Orient u. Occident*, i, 348, 352; *Die Çukasaptati*, ed. Schmidt, *passim*.

convinces Rodarchus ; Meldred's queen very naturally pursues Lailoken with her hatred, whereas Ganiada entirely overlooks Merlin's charge, entreats him to remain at court, and even herself retires to the forest with him. The incident, in short, has no effect on the course of the narrative and is inconsistent with it. All of this gives us additional reason for believing that the Lailoken story is not derived from the *Vita Merlini*, but reverts to an earlier and purer source, and that the poet was expanding his narrative by incorporating into it this episode from Lailoken's life.

The next instance of Merlin's apparently causeless laughter in the *Vita Merlini* occurs after *Guendoloena's Lover* : ¹—

After Merlin's murder of Guendoloena's lover, his pursuers lead him captive to Ganiada. He bides his time, hoping to be able to escape again to the forest, and meanwhile refuses to speak a word or to smile. For his diversion Rodarchus orders him to be led through the streets of the town. As he goes out, Merlin sees at the gate of the castle a slave begging alms from the passers-by ; whereupon he stands still and laughs. Soon he espies a youth buying new shoes, and again he stands still and laughs. The attendants report this strange conduct to Rodarchus, who accordingly promises Merlin that if he explains the reason for it he may return to the forest. The beggar at the gate, Merlin replies, is an imposter ; he has buried a treasure in the ground beneath his feet. The youth who bought new shoes will never use them, for he has already been drowned. Servants, whom Rodarchus sends out to discover the truth of Merlin's words, find the youth's body on the shore of a river, and heaps of coin buried in the ground where the beggar had stood. Merlin returns to the forest.

This episode has already been referred to the Talmud as its source : ²—

Benajah, as we have seen,³ succeeds in capturing Aschmedai by a ruse, when Solomon wishes to consult him as to where he can find the Schamir. As Benajah leads him in chains to Solomon, Aschmedai bursts into laughter

¹ Vv. 481-534.

² Paris, *Huth Merlin* (*Merlin*, ed. Paris et Ulrich, Paris, 1886), I, xiv. See *Gittin*, 68 ; for a German translation of this section by Badad, see *Salman und Morolf*, ed. Vogt, Halle, 1880, 213-217.

³ See above, p. 246.

three times : once on hearing a man order from a shoemaker shoes that will last seven years ; once on seeing a magician make money by the practice of his art ; and the third time at the wedding procession, as related above. After they have arrived at Solomon's court Aschmedai, in response to Benajah's demand that he explain his mysterious laughter, says that the man who ordered the shoes had but seven days to live, and that the magician who was winning money by his magic arts had treasure hidden in the ground beneath his feet ; the explanation of his laughter at the wedding has been given.

When we have once understood the reason why the strange story of *Ganieda and the Leaf* was inserted into the *Vita Merlini*, we see that these instances of Merlin's laughter are of secondary importance in the legend, and that the author, having attached to Merlin the story of Lailoken's laughter, is expanding his material by adding to it these other incidents which have the same underlying theme—the apparently motiveless laughter of a captive supernatural being, caused by his superior knowledge of the truth. Obviously the poet was using a floating story of Oriental origin, which told of a superhuman being in captivity who indulged in mysterious laughter as a reward for the explanation of which he regained his freedom.¹ This may,

¹On mysterious laughter that is caused by superhuman knowledge, cf., a Roumanian legend, cited by Gaster (*Folk Lore*, xvi, 1905, 419 ff.) :—The Lord commands the archangel Gabriel to take the soul of a certain widow ; Gabriel out of pity for her children does not obey. As a punishment the Lord condemns him to live on earth for thirty years as the servant of an Abbot, whose soul he is to receive at the end of his service. During the thirty years Gabriel never smiles, but on the last day of his servitude he laughs mysteriously four times :—at the Abbot, who orders him to buy a new pair of shoes for him ; at a beggar who is asking alms ; at the bishop and the governor of the town, as they drive past him in great pomp ; and at a man who is stealing an earthenware pot. When the Abbot asks the reason for his laughter, he tells him who he is, and that he is to receive the Abbot's soul ; he explains that he had laughed at the Abbot's order to buy shoes, because he had so short a time to live ; at the beggar, because he was sitting on a treasure unawares ; at the bishop and

or may not, have been attached previously to Merlin's name ; there is nothing in our sources to indicate which was the case.

In the episode from the prose *Merlin*¹ to which I have referred above, as Merlin is being led to Vortigern by the messengers whom the king has sent out to find the child without a father, he laughs at a churl buying leather to mend his shoes, and also at a funeral procession. His laughter in this episode forms one of the elements upon which Dr. Gaster bases his statement that the traditions of Aschmedai and Solomon "lie at the bottom of the legend [of Merlin] as elaborated in England by Geoffrey or any of his immediate predecessors."² It should be observed, however, that in the account of Merlin's journey to Vortigern in Geoffrey's *Historia*, the laughter has no place whatever ; its first appearance in this episode in literature is in the prose version of Robert de Borron's *Mer-*

the governor, because they are the children of the widow whose soul he had spared ; and at the thief, because clay was stealing clay. (Cited from Gaster, *Feuilleton Zeitung*, No. 299, Berlin, March 26, 1890, in *Arthour and Merlin*, ed. Kölbing, p. cvi, n. * * *.) See also, *The Death of Fergus*, an Irish tale contained in a manuscript of the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries (*Silva Gadelica*, II, 278, 279). Iubhan, a fairy monarch, laughs at a soldier, who complains that the soles of his new brogues are too thin ; he explains to a king, who asks his reason, that though the brogues are thin, the soldier will never wear them out. Before night the man is killed. "Yet, another day the household disputed of all manner of things, how they would do this or that, but never said : 'if it so please God.' Then Iubhan laughed and uttered a lay :—'Man talks, but God showeth the event.'"³ Cf., in the *Language of Animals*, the hero's unexplained laughter on overhearing a conversation between animals, Benfey, *Orient u. Occident*, II (1864), 152 ; Frazer, *Arch. Rev.*, I (1888), 169-175 ; Schmidt, *Märchen des Straparola*, p. 324 ; Larminie, *West Irish Folk Tales*, pp. 17, 18. On strange laughter, see Campbell, *Tales*, II, 30, 31 ; Sébillot, *Contes populaires de la Haute-Bretagne*, II, 221 ; Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie* (4th ed.), I, 424. On the laughter of wood sprites, see Mannhardt, *Wald- u. Feldkulte*, II, 115.

¹ *Huth Merlin*, I, 48-51 ; *Merlin*, pp. 27-29 ; *English Merlin*, pp. 33, 34.

² *Folk Lore*, XVI, 425.

lin. This fact would not in itself necessarily exclude the possibility that Robert used a tradition attached to Merlin's name before the time of Geoffrey, who, we should in that case be obliged to assume, had chosen to suppress the feature of Merlin's laughter. But, apart from the numerous difficulties that such a theory presents (which this is not the place to discuss), it is surely more reasonable, in the light of the evidence from the *Vita Merlini*, to believe that Robert de Borron elaborated his account of Merlin's journey to Vortigern by drawing from an independent narrative, containing such a retelling of the Aschmedai material as we have seen doubtless developed. Knowing, whether directly or indirectly, from the *Vita Merlini* that Merlin on another occasion, when he was a king's captive, had laughed at the churl buying shoes, by a very simple process of transference he worked this episode into his narrative, and expanded it by the additional feature of the funeral procession, which he derived from a similar current story.¹

¹ The student of the Merlin legend cannot deplore too deeply the causes that left Gaston Paris's article on the "devinaillies" of Merlin merely a projected piece of work. We have only his words that if Robert had had the *Vita Merlini* directly before him, he would not have failed to use in addition to the story of the churl, the other two examples, "au moins aussi piquants," of Merlin's divining power contained there. "Il est donc probable qu'il circulait oralement des contes sur les 'devinaillies' de Merlin, dont deux ont été recueillis et insérés ici par Robert (*Huth Merlin*, I, xiv, xv).

A reflection of *Grisandole* may perhaps be seen in the version of Merlin's journey to Vortigern, given in the Middle English poem, *Arthour and Merlin* (vv. 1296-1412). Here Merlin laughs three times, once at the churl, the second time at the funeral procession, and the third time apparently at nothing at all. He explains later that he was laughing because the chamberlain of the queen is a woman in the guise of a man, who has refused the queen's proffers of love; she has therefore accused him to the king of making base proposals to her, and the king has ordered that he be hanged. The messengers tell Vortigern Merlin's story, the truth of which the king proves. His eagerness to see Merlin is increased thereby.

In *Grisandole* Merlin's laughter at the beggar, first attributed to him in the *Vita Merlini*, is evidently an importation that came with his name. The scene in the chapel where his laughter is occasioned once more by the thought of buried treasure is, it is scarcely necessary to say, simply a working over of the same idea, elaborated by the use of material for which we find excellent Celtic parallels. The spell, for instance, that is cast upon the squire may be compared to that cast by the child Taliesin upon the bards and heralds at the court of Maelgwn. Hidden in a corner of the hall, he enchants them so that when they pass before the king to cry largess, they make obeisance without saying a word, only making mouths at him, and playing "Blerwm, blerwm" on their lips.¹

An obtrusive and at first a perplexing fact in studying *Grisandole* is that many of its features appear in the *Vita Merlini* in a detached and disconnected form. The unfaithful queen, a youth disguised as a maiden,² the captive wild man, his betraying and mocking laughter, and his refusal to explain it except as the price for his liberty, all are found there, but in separate episodes. We might be tempted to suppose that the elements of the *Vita Merlini* had been worked over by a later hand into our one long story, were it not for the folk tales which have aided us in outlining the

Nothing further is said of the queen and the chamberlain. Cf. on the sources of the episode *Arthour and Merlin*, ed. Kölbing, p. cxviii, note.

Merlin's statement to Grisandole that he had laughed when she bound him, because a woman with her craft had been able to do what no man could do is an echo of the Niniane story. For further instances of Merlin's strange laughter, see *Merlin*, pp. 24, 26, 234, 235.

¹ Guest, *Mabinogion*, III, 371. Cf. also the spell cast by the *cor enchanté*, Biquet, *Lai du Cor*, ed. Wulff, Lund and Paris, 1888, vv. 79 ff.; by Auberon's horn, *Huon de Bordeaux*, ed. Guessard et Grandmaison, Paris, 1860, vv. 3240-3243; cf., for further references, *Studies in Fairy Mythology*, p. 117.

² Vv. 332 ff.

source of *Grisandole*, and which show us that it existed in a form in which Merlin had no place. We have seen also that in the *Vita Merlini*, these features are derived from scattered sources, that Merlin's laughter at the queen, and his laughter in the public square, came, one immediately from a Celtic, the other from a Talmudic original, and that the author was probably actuated in his transference of these incidents to Merlin's life by the attributes that Merlin possessed in common with the original heroes, Lailoken and Aschmedai. The fact that these independent bits of widespread tradition had been thus early attached to Merlin's name made it possible for a later narrator to introduce him into *x*, an independently developed story having the same elements as those episodes in which he already had a place. Clearly then *Grisandole's* capture of Merlin is worthless in the use to which Vesselovski has put it, as a basis for a theory of identification between Merlin and Aschmedai,¹ inasmuch as it represents a part of the original story, into which Merlin was introduced later as an actor; and the instances of Merlin's laughter, which have been used to support this identification have equally little value for the same purpose, since, although they were told of Aschmedai originally, they may have been repeated of Merlin because of the association of ideas stirred by the story of Lailoken, which was transferred to Merlin's name by the author of the *Vita*.

Our analysis of *Grisandole*, based upon parallel or related folk tales, complicated though it has been, has yielded us some definite results. The story is in the main outline derived directly or through intermediaries from a source, *x*, composed for the greater part of elements ultimately of Oriental origin; the most important variations of *Grisandole* from *x* are in those parts of the episode that directly concern

¹ See Vesselovski, *O Solomone i Kitovras*, St. Petersburg, 1872, pp. 325, 326.

Merlin; and these variations are due to the introduction into *x* of an early story of Merlin, which antedates the *Vita Merlini*, and which is plainly Celtic in origin. We may regard *Grisandole*, although it is preserved only in a comparatively late source, as valuable testimony to certain early features in the legend of Merlin, for a knowledge of which, however, we are not wholly dependent upon it. It has been obscured by much foreign material, and subjected to late influences, yet it clearly preserves the story of Merlin, the wild man and shape-shifter, coming in pursuit of his truant love,—a story which the author of the *Vita Merlini* knew, but which could not have been derived from his version by the author of *Grisandole*, who presents the material in so different a form. It occupies an almost unique position in the Merlin legend, inasmuch as it bears testimony to a tradition independent of the *Historia* of Geoffrey of Monmouth, whereas the vast mass of Merlin material in the prose romances consists of accretions that have gathered about Geoffrey's narrative. Its importance as a source for the legend of Merlin gives it a claim on our consideration.

APPENDIX.

In the *Livre d'Artus, P.*,¹ there is an episode which is too closely allied to the *Story of Grisandole* to be omitted from our study here :—

The fay, Niniane, the love of Merlin, transmits to her beautiful cousin, Lunete, many secrets of the magic art that she has learned from Merlin. Lunete, in order to have in her power her lover, Brehus sans Pitié, goes to a famous fountain in Broceliande, builds a chapel beside it, places a stone near at hand, fastens a goblet to an overhanging sycamore, and so enchants the place that when a passing knight shall pour water from the goblet upon the stone, a fearful storm shall arise, at which Brehus shall appear to do

¹ Sections 86–91, 94, 99.

combat with the stranger knight, and if victorious shall lead away his opponent's horse ; if the other knight wins, he shall take Brehus's place as defender of the perilous fountain, and lord of Lunete. Brandus des Isles, the cousin of Brehus, visits him, falls in love with Niniane, and learns magic from her. The two pairs of cousins dwell thus for a long time together. Merlin understands Niniane, and the situation. Knowing that the knight, Kalogrenant, is about to fare through Broceliande, he determines to attract him to the fountain that its fame may reach some other knight who will successfully undertake the adventure, and break up the contented quartette of lovers. He therefore shifts his shape to that of a giant herdsman, takes a great club in his hand, and wraps himself in a shaggy skin. By magic he gathers about him a herd of deer, stags, and other creatures, that graze about him absolutely under his control. In this guise he stands in the path of Kalogrenant, a sufficiently hideous object to strike terror to the heart of the knight, who, however, addresses him, and learns in answer to his questions that Merlin is lord of the forest, and what the adventure of the perilous fountain involves. Kalogrenant undertakes the adventure ; he is defeated by Brehus, and returns to court, where his account of his experiences leads Yvain to resolve to find the fountain.

It does not need demonstration that in this episode the author of the *Livre d'Artus* was borrowing largely from Chrétien's *Yvain*. In the *Livre d'Artus* the adventure is, of course, incomplete, but so far as it goes the close agreement in details makes this fact clear at once. A notable difference is that in the *Yvain* the interest turns about a different set of personages ; Laudine is the lady of the fountain, Esclados le Ros is her defender, Lunete is her faithful attendant, the giant herdsman is nameless. But by far the most important difference is that in the *Livre d'Artus* the true nature of the adventure at the fountain, as well as that of the giant herdsman, is clearly understood by the narrator. We owe to modern scholarship the demonstration that the "easily-consolated widow," Laudine, is a fay, that she maintains a fairy "custom" in her castle by the perilous fountain, that the giant herdsman and her husband, Esclados le Ros, are probably merely two manifestations of the same being, a shape-shifter, the creature whom she uses to attract valorous mortals to herself,—early Celtic features, all of which

are euhemerized and obscured in Chrétien's account.¹ In the *Livre d'Artus, P.*, on the other hand, the true character of the fountain is clear. Like the magic garden in the *Joie de la Cour* in *Erec*, it has been constructed by a fay, who desires to keep her beloved with her as the defender of her "custom," and with the true allegiance of the fay to the bravest hero, and none of the mortal scruples that fill Laudine's heart at the thought of matrimony with the slayer of her husband, she is ready to give her favors to any newcomer who can conquer the knight of the fountain. It is also plainly shown that Merlin is a being in disguise, whose function is to guide to the dwelling of the fay the knight who would essay the adventure. The striking similarities in the two accounts indicate that the author of the *Livre d'Artus* was directly dependent upon Chrétien, but it is equally clear that he knew his fairy material in a purer form than that which he found in the *Yvain*.

This is surely true of Merlin's part. Although his hostility is directed in a roundabout fashion against his foe, Brandus, with whom he has no plan for bringing the mortal into conflict, he is clearly a shape-shifter, acting as fairy guide, and enticing a warrior to aid him in regaining his love. In addition to the fact that Brandus des Isles has skill in necromancy, his name has an otherworld connotation, and may be classed with Galehout des Isles Lointaines, Brangemuer roi des Isles de mer, Allardin of the Isles, the King of the Golden Isle, and that of many another fairy knight. Merlin's rival for Niniane's favor is thus, like himself, an otherworld being. The story then belongs among those that represent a contest between two supernatural lovers for the possession of an otherworld mistress. Such stories treat of an old and widespread mythological theme, a hostile deity's theft of the

¹ See Brown, *Ivain*, pp. 145 ff.

heavenly treasure, often the queen of the other world, from the divine possessor. Such a theme is contained in the *Ramayana*, in the story of the theft of the goddess Sita from her husband, Rama, by the *rakshasi*, Ravana, from whom Rama wins her back by the aid of the king of the apes. A parallel is found in Greek mythology, if we accept the view that Helen was originally a goddess, and that in the story of her rape by Paris, as well as in the version that Theseus and Peirithous carried her off to Aphidnae, there is contained the old myth of the theft of a goddess by an immortal being.¹ In Scandinavian mythology the same theme is represented when Thiassi, the giant, carries Iðunn, the wife of the god, Bragi, away from the gods to Jotunheim;² and it is also found in Thor's yielding of Freyja to the giant Thrym in return for his hammer which Thrym has stolen from him.³ Thus, too, we read in early Celtic material of the rivalry between the fairy king Mider of Bri Leith and the great enchanter Mac Oc for the possession of Etain, Mider's wife, whom Mac Oc had secluded in a fairy bower;⁴ and in the *Mabinogion* we are told that the enchanter Manawyddan was deprived of his fairy wife, Rhiannon, by the powerful magician Llwyd, who imprisoned her in a vanishing castle.⁵ This kind of narrative leads us into mythological rather than romantic conditions, where the supernatural race, in comparison with whom human beings are of secondary importance, lives a life of its own, *semota ab nostris rebus*, and plays the principal part;⁶ whereas in romance the

¹ See Usener, *Der Stoff des griechischen Epos*, Vienna, 1897, pp. 3, 11-13.

² See *Bragarœður*, ch. LVI.

³ See *Thrymskviða*.

⁴ See *Zs. f. vergl. Sprachf.*, xxviii (1885), 587; Meyer and Nutt, *Voyage of Bran*, II, 50.

⁵ Guest, *Mabinogion*, III, 172 ff.

⁶ The traces of such a mythological stage in Celtic narrative are to be seen in the *Cuth Maige Turedh*, *Rev. Celt.*, xii, 57 ff. See also Meyer and Nutt, II, 172 ff.; Nutt, *Fairy Mythology of Shakespeare*, London, 1900, pp.

mortal is the centre of the action, the immortal beings serve simply to contribute in one way or another to his welfare, and sundry devices are adopted to bring the mythological and the various human elements into contact. A typical example of one method of accomplishing this is represented in the Irish tale of *Loegaire mac Crimthann*, which is contained in the *Book of Leinster*, and hence is certainly older than the year 1150 :—¹

A beautiful gold-bedecked warrior appears one morning to Loegaire, the son of the king of Connaught, and announcing that he is Fiachna mac Retach, one of the fairy folk, asks Loegaire's aid against Goll, an other-world prince, who has carried away Fiachna's wife. Loegaire gladly follows Fiachna with an armed force to the other world, defeats Goll, and restores Fiachna's wife to him ; Fiachna gives his daughter in marriage to Loegaire.

Here two fairy princes are at strife for the possession of a fay ; one of them summons a valiant mortal to his aid, who as the true hero of the tale, has an opportunity to display his marvellous valor by a combat with no less a foe than the enchanter who has carried off the lady.² We can scarcely

17-23. Cf. the remarks on the degradation of supernatural beings to the ranks of mortals, Stokes and Windisch, *Irische Texte*, Leipzig, 1884-1900, III, i, 232.

¹ For an outline of this story, the Leinster version of which has not been translated, see Brown, *Iwain*, p. 40, note 2 ; for a translation from a fifteenth century manuscript see *Silva Gadelica*, II, 290-291. Cf. also on the type of story, *Iwain*, p. 99.

² A curiously confused story contained in the French prose *Tristan* (Löseth, *Le Roman en Prose de Tristan*, Paris, 1891, sect. 323-325) should be compared with the episode from the *Livre d'Artus*.—The enchanter, Mabon, and his devoted friend, Menonnas, love the same maiden, Grysinde, whom they have met with a companion by a fountain. They have a contest for the right of possession, in which Mabon is defeated. Grysinde and Menonnas take up their abode in a castle of the latter, and soon they hate each other so thoroughly that they enter into an agreement by which Grysinde shall behead Menonnas if he is overcome in battle by a stranger knight, and Menonnas shall show the same attention to Grysinde if she is

fail then to recognize that in the source of our episode in the *Livre d'Artus*, P., which for convenience we may term the

surpassed in beauty by any lady who comes to the castle. Mabon, in the meanwhile, is bespelled within his castle by the companion of Grysinde, with whom he has consoled himself for the loss of his former love, and whom he has instructed in the magic art. The spell is to last during the lifetime of Menonnas and Grysinde. He therefore sends to Cornwall the Nef de Joie, a rudderless fairy ship, the work of Merlin (cf. *Studies in Fairy Mythology*, p. 16, note 1), his master in the art of enchantment, to transport Tristan and Iseult to the scene, as a combination that will easily surpass Menonnas and Grysinde. The Nef de Joie bears them first to the Isle de la Fontaine, where there is exactly such a perilous fountain (*Fontaine des Merveilles*) as that established by Lunete in the *Livre d'Artus*. Tristan successfully performs the adventure of the fountain. He is relieved from the necessity of remaining on the island by the reappearance of the Nef de Joie, in which he and Iseult embark, and are borne to two other minor adventures before they arrive at the island of Mabon, who explains why he has sent for them. Tristan undertakes the combat with Menonnas, and the boat sails away to his tower. Iseult is promptly declared superior in beauty to Grysinde, whose head Menonnas at once cuts off; he is then slain in battle by Tristan, who sends the two heads to Mabon, and with Iseult leaves the tower.

This episode and that in the *Livre d'Artus* contain the same essentials. Mabon, like Merlin, is deprived of his love by a rival, to separate her from whom he calls in the aid of a mortal. The love of each is a fay (note that, although it is not expressly said that Grysinde is a fay, she and her companion are found by Mabon and Menonnas beside a fountain, a common place to meet fays; her companion has skill in necromancy; her adventures are laid in the other world); the opponent of each is an enchanter; in each the principal adventure, although in the *Tristan* it is not the final adventure, is that of the perilous fountain. To give the adventure its proper conclusion and make Tristan lord of the Isle de la Fontaine would have been impossible, for Tristan is handicapped by Iseult's presence; and the absurd conclusion of the story of Menonnas and Grysinde is evidently a late feature adopted by the narrator to relieve the situation, and turn Iseult to some account in the adventure. This termination, it should be said, is repeated from an earlier portion of the *Tristan* (sect. 40-41), where it forms one of the adventures performed by Tristan on sundry islands where he lands on his voyage with Iseult from Ireland to Cornwall. The account of this voyage and that in the Nef de Joie reminds one of a brief *inram*, and seems almost like an attenuated copy of that kind of narrative. These two episodes—that of the Isle de la Fontaine, and that of Lunete's fountain—

Rival Enchanters, Merlin is represented in a primitive situation, not identical with that in which he appears in the source of *Grisandole*, but so similar to it that one seems to be a variant of the other.¹ I do not undertake to determine which of these two themes was first attached to Merlin's name. Judging merely from the nature of the material we should very naturally see in the *Rival Enchanters*, leading us back as it does to an early mythology, the more primitive story. But these mythological elements are so obscured, and they appear in so late a guise in the *Livre d'Artus*, that it would be rather daring to assume that the source necessarily formed an early part of the Merlin legend. It might, in fact, be argued that the *Livre d'Artus* represents the bungling effort of a late redactor to retell the story of Chrétien's *Yvain*, and that he worked in the figure of Merlin as the giant herdsman merely because he had appeared in earlier prose romantic material in that character. But it should be said that although Merlin appears elsewhere in the romances as a giant herdsman, it is never in the capacity of other-

point distinctly to a common source, although each has apparently passed through intermediaries before reaching us. It is noticeable that in the episode from the *Tristan* there are repeated echoes of the Merlin material. The Nef de Joie is Merlin's vessel; Mabon is Merlin's pupil; the treatment of Mabon by his makeshift love, the companion of Grysinde, to whom he has taught his art, distinctly reflects Niniane's bespelling of Merlin; the name of Mabon's true fairy love is Grysinde, which brings to mind *Grisandole*, the assumed name of Merlin's love—but this last is almost too faint to be called an echo. There is some ground therefore for assuming that the author of the *Tristan* at any rate had been influenced by the source of the story in the *Livre d'Artus*.

¹ It need be no cause for concern that we find Merlin in one source seeking his wife who has turned from him to a mortal, and in another harassed by her desertion of him for an enchanter. Mider before him had led a life that was one series of quests for his fairy love, Etain; now with the great Mac Oc, now with Ailell, and most of all with the mortal, Eochaid, she kept him in a state of amorous uncertainty; and we merely find one of several parallels between the legends of Mider and Merlin, when we read the episode from the *Livre d'Artus*, *Grisandole*, and *Guendolena's Lover*.

world guide, and that from his character there it is difficult to see how his part in the episode of the *Perilous Fountain* could have developed. The incidents to which I refer are as far removed from fairyland as is the scene between Aucassin and the giant herdsman in *Aucassin et Nicolette*,¹ and are very plainly late concoctions, introduced into the story almost as a comic interlude to exhibit Merlin's accomplishments in shape-shifting.² On the other hand the

¹ Sect. 24.

² The incidents are the following:—(a) *Merlin*, pp. 36–38; *English Merlin*, pp. 42–50; *Huth Merlin*, I, 63–65. Uter and Pendragon desire to take a castle held by the Saxons. Pendragon sends messengers far and wide to find Merlin to ask his advice as to how the castle may be taken. Merlin, knowing that the king wishes him goes to the town where the messengers are, “vint comme uns boskerons en la ville une grant cuignie a son col, et uns grans solers cauchies et une courte cote vestue toute depecie si ot les kavelis moult hirecies et la barbe moult grande et moult sambloit bien homme sauvage.” He bids the messengers tell Pendragon to come to the forest of Norhumberlande on the following day, where he will meet Merlin. Here one of the king's followers finds “une grant plente de bestes et une moult let homme et contrefait qui ces bestes gardoit.” This man tells him that if the king will come to the forest he will tell him where he may find Merlin. When the king arrives he directs him to a certain town where Merlin will come to him. After further shape-shifting, Merlin in his true form visits the king and admits that it was he who appeared to him as the man of the woods, and the herdsman.

(b) *Merlin*, pp. 191 ff.; *English Merlin*, pp. 257 ff. (cf. *Livre d'Artus*, P., p. 26). Merlin wishes to inform Gawain and his brothers, who are in Camelot, that the knight Saigremor is hard pressed by Saxon enemies. He accordingly “prinst une vielle samblance et fu encors en une vielle cotele de burel toute deschiree et toute depanee et avant estoit il lons et corsus et ore se fist il cours et bochus et viel et si ot la teste entre-mellee et la barbe longue. et tenoit une machue a son col si cachoit moult grant foison de bestes devant li.” He comes with his herd before the walls of Camelot and there bewails the fate of Saigremor so loudly that Gawain and his brothers at once arm themselves to go to Saigremor's assistance.

(c) *Merlin*, p. 130; *English Merlin*, p. 167. “Il ot chaucies uns grans solers de vache et ot vestu cote et surcot de burel et caperon si fu chains dune corioe neuee de mouton. et sestoit gros et lons et noirs & hirechies si samble bien cruel et felon.” In this form he appears to Arthur, and tells him that Merlin will come to him later.

source of *Guendoloena's Lover* and *Grisandole* not only contains early material, but did, we know, have a place in early Merlin material; and from Merlin's part there as a wild man of the woods seeking to separate his wife from a mortal it is possible that the theme of the *Rival Enchanters*, which is so closely allied to it, might have developed.

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